

# January 21, 2015 CDC Ebola Response Update

*[Announcer] This program is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.*

[Larry Thomas] Although, the number of new Ebola cases in West Africa is starting to plateau or decline in some areas, the fight is far from over. Sierra Leone is still experiencing a sharp increase in cases, and the virus remains widespread throughout Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. The latest numbers show more than twenty-one thousand cases of Ebola have been reported in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, and nearly eighty-five hundred people have died. Dr. Tom Frieden, Director of the CDC, says the agency will not relent in its effort to stop the spread of Ebola until we get to zero cases.

[Dr. Tom Frieden] Until we get to zero in these countries, they won't be able to fully move on to rebuilding their health care system and making sure that, as a society, they can get back to work and back to making progress. Until they get to zero, we in the U.S. will not be safe from other potential imported cases. Until they get to zero, we can't be sure that the disease won't spread to other countries.

[Larry Thomas] The recent report is encouraging because it shows that our tremendous efforts have paid off. As of January 13, three areas in Guinea have been declared Ebola-free, and on January 3, the president of Mali declared the country free of Ebola. Dr. Frieden says the tools needed to stop Ebola are now in place, and the response is shifting into a new phase.

[Dr. Tom Frieden] I think the next phase really has three broad components. First, to make sure that we break the cycle of exponential growth that's happened in individual communities and the widespread transmission that's still happening. Second is to trace every chain of transmission so that we can stop the disease at the source and prevent it from spreading. And the third aspect is strengthening the areas that are now Ebola-free so that if there is another person who comes there, they don't spread Ebola in the hospital, they don't spread it in the community. They are cared for and isolated promptly.

[Larry Thomas] More than two hundred CDC employees are in West Africa now, and hundreds more are working on the Ebola response from the CDC's Atlanta headquarters. These efforts won't stop until West Africa is Ebola-free.

*[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.*